

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SSM-03
IO-13 ACDA-07 AF-08 OMB-01 /088 W
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R 111235Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2603
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 4172

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, XF
SUBJECT: PNC EVE

SUMMARY: AS PNC DELEGATES GATHER IN CAIRO, WE UNDERSTAND
MODERATE LEADERSHIP GLOOMY MOOD. LEIT MOTIF OF MODERATE LAMENT IS
REPORTEDLY THAT USG HAS MADE ABSOLUTELY NO RESPONSE, CLANDESTINE
OR OVERT, TO WHAT ARE DESCRIBED AS CLEAR SIGNALS FROM FATAH
OF WILLINGNESS RADICALLY REVERSE PLO POLICY TO PERMIT ESTABLISHMENT
TRUNCATED PALESTINIAN STATE PLEDGED TO PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE
WITH ISRAEL. LACKING ANY HINT OF US SUPPORT FOR WB"GAZA
"AUTHORITY" (OR "ENTITY"), MODERATES SEE UNACCEPTABLE RISK IN
FORMALIZING PREVIOUS SIGNALS BY AMENDMENT OF NATIONAL CHARTER.
END SUMMARY

1. MANY PNC DELEGATES, INCLUDING ARAFAT AND QADDUMI, ARE ALREADY
IN CAIRO FOR PALESTINE NATIONAL COUNCIL (PNC) DUE BEGIN AFTERNOON
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MARCH 12. NORTH AMERICAN BLOC "DELEGATES", INCLUDING EDWARD
SA'ID (COLUMBIA), ABU LUGHOD (NORTHWESTERN), AND FAYIZ SAYIGH ARE
DUE TODAY. FOLLOWING IMPRESSIONS OF MOOD AND LIKELY OUTCOME OF
CONFERENCE ARE DRAWN FROM CONVERSATIONS WHICH MFA OFFICERS AND
AMERICAN JOURNALISTS HAVE HAD WITH SENIOR DELEGATES OVER LAST
THREE DAYS.

2. MODERATES ARE UNFORMALLY DEPRESSED. TAHSIN BASHIR, GOE AMB TO ARAB LEAGUE, WHO HAS HAD LONG SEMI-OFFICIAL TALKS WITH FATAH MODERATES FOR LAST THREE DAYS, SAYS THAT CONFERENCE, COMING IN WAKE OF LEBANON, IS SEEN BY THEM AS /CONFERENCE OF NATIONAL SURVIVAL". ALL OUR INTERLOCUTORS AGREE THAT MODERATES NOW STRONGLY FAVOR WB/GAZA STATE, BUT MAJOR POLITICAL STEP IN THAT DIRECTION BY PNC IS OUT OF QUESTION. THERE WILL BE NO REVISION NATIONAL CHARTER AND LITTLE CHANCE REVISION OF 1974 PNC'S TEN POINTS. MODERATES SAID TO BELIEVE THEY HAVE SIGNALLED EVIDENCE OF THEIR MODERATION (E.G., FATAH CONTACTS WITH ISRAELIS IN PARIS, CONVERSATIONS WITH KREISKY, LONDON PLO REP'S STATEMENTS--ALL "AUTHORIZED", THOUGH PUBLICLY DISCLAIMED) BUT USG HAS NOT RESPONDED. US WIRE SERVICE CORRESPONDENT CITED UNNAMED PALESTINIAN AS SAYING ONLY OFFICIAL REMARK BY NEW US ADMINISTRATION ON PLO HAS BEEN SEC. VANCE'S JERUSLAEM STATEMENT THAT CHARTER MUST BE REVISED, AN IMPOSSIBLY "RADICAL" STEP IN ABSENCE ANY SIGN OF WHAT US WOULD DO TO MAKE FURTHER POLITCAL RISK WORTH TAKING. BASHIR DETECTS A RISING PALESTINIAN FEAR THAT USG HAS "DETERMINED" TAKE HARD LINE IN HOPE PNC WILL TOTALLY REJECT GENEVA, THEORETICALLY LEAVING EGYPT AND SYRIA FREE TO NEGOTIATE SEPARATE PEACE.

3. EVERYONE TO WHOM WE HAVE SPOKEN EMPHASIZES THIS APPARENT PALESTINIAN IDEE FIXE THAT IN ABSENCE EVEN SMALL US GESTURE, CLANDESTINE OR OTHERWISE, PNC WOLD HAVE NOTHING TO GAIN BY MAKING EXPLICIT WHAT IT HAS SIGNALLED "TO NO AVAIL". ILLUSTRATING THIS POINT, BASHIR SAYS "FONMIN"QADDUMI TOLD KREISKY HE WOULD ADOVCATE FEDERATION WITH ISRAEL REPEAT ISRAEL IF HE COULD BE SURE OF US SUPPORT FOR PALESTINIAN STATE. SOME OTHERS (NOT ARAFAT), BAHIR ADDED, ARE CONFIDENTIAL

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ASKING EGYPTIANS FOR PRIVATE COMMITMENT FROM US FOR SOVEREIGN WB/GAZA STATE, AFTER WHICH THEY WOULD ADVOCATE ARRANGEMENT WITH JORDAN. WE HAVE HEARD OF NO PALESTINIAN DELGATE, HOWEVER, WILLING TO ACCEPT LINKAGE PRIOR TO ESTABLISHMENT WB/GAZA STATE.

4. CONSENSUS ON OUTCOME PNC REMAINS SAME AS FOR LAST FEW WEEKS MANDATE FOR EXCOMM ON KEY QUESTIONS. BASHIR SAYS MANDATE WILL BE COUCHED IN BROADCAST TERMS; I.E., EXCOMM RESPONSIBILITY FOR FORMING GOVERNMENT IN EXILE AND ACCEPTING INVITATION FOR GENEVA WILL NOT BE SPELLED OUT EXPLICITLY. FORM AND CONENT OF POLITICAL DECLARATION STILL NOT DECIDED AND WILL BE SUBJECT INTENSIVE DEBATE. BASHIR EXPECTS DECLARATION TO BE GENERAL IN NATURE WITH EMRPHASIS ON ARAB AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY TO PALES- TINIANS. HE DOUBTS TEN POINTS OF 1974 WILL BE OFFICIALLY REVISED.

5. RUMORS ABOUND THAT QADDUMI MAYBE FIGHTING FOR HIS POLITICAL LIFE. ONE UNCONFIRMED REPORT SUGGESTS HE MIGHT BE REMOVED FROM PALESTINIAN POWER CENTER BY ABOLSIHMENT OF PLO POLITICAL DEPARTMENT WHICH HE HEADS. WE HAVE BEEN UNABLE DISCOVER WHY HE

UNDER SUCH PRESSURE, AND CAN ONLY SPECULATE THAT HE HAS TOO OFTEN EXCEEDED HIS INSTRUCTIONS FROM ARAFAT. RECENT EXAMPLE WAS ARAFAT'S "ANGER", AS REPORTED TO US BY FAHMY'S OFFICE, AT QADDUMI'S STATEMENT TO Wafa Feb 17 (MORING SEC VANCE'S ARRIVAL IN CAIRO) TO EFFECT THAT PLO STANDS BY STRATEGIC GOAL OF SECULAR STATE ALL PALESTINE AND REFUSES RENOUNCE ARMED STRUGGLE.

6. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH EGYPTIANS CLAIM T BE GOING ALL OUT TO TALK SENSE TO PALESTINIANS, THEY ARE FRANKLY PESSIMISTIC. PERHAPS PREDICTABLY, PALESTINAIANS SEEM TO BE THINKING NOT IN TERMS OF PROVING THEIR PEACEFUL INTENTIONS TO ISRAEL, BUT RATHER IN TERMS OF MAKING US UNDERSTAND MODERATE LEADERSHIP'S ALLEGED POLITICAL CONSTRAINTS. OUR PRELIMINARY SOUNDINGS SUGGEST THAT MODERATES VERGING ON DESAPIR, CLAIMING THAT THEY HAVE CLEARLY SIGNALLED WILLINGNESS ESTABLISH WB/GAZA STATE WHICH WOULD LIVE IN PEACE WITH ISRAEL, BUT US NON-RESPONSE MAKES IT VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE TAKE "REVOLUTIONARY" STEP OF ACKNOWLEDGING THIS ASPIRATION
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PUBLICLY AND EXPLICITLY.
MATTHEWS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977CAIRO04172
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770085-0433
Format: TEL
From: CAIRO
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770370/aaaacjrm.tel
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Litigation History:
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Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
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Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3142508
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PNC EVE SUMMARY: AS PNC DELEGATES GATHER IN CAIRO, WE UNDERSTAND MODERATE LEADERSHIP GLOOMY MOOD. LEIT
MOTIF OF MO
TAGS: PFOR, XF, PLO
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/cadc3dba-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009